

# Bridgeport Evening Farmer

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## FEROUS WINTER GALE LEAVES BRIDGEPORT RAILY CRIPPLED; RAILROADS AND TROLLEYS PARALYZED; BIG IN PROPERTY LOSS REPORTED

### FIREMEN IN PERIL AS SECOND BLAZE BREAKS OUT AT MATTRESS CO.

Jaught Between Blazing  
Upper Story and Flames  
Spread Beneath Them By  
Burning Elevator, Men  
Are Saved By Warning  
Shout of Assistant Chief  
Beardsley.

Flames Nearly Destroy  
Building in Fire Closely  
Following One of Monday  
in Same Place—Tenement  
Houses Endangered—In-  
cendiary, Say Under-  
writers.

Breaking out again after firemen had considered the flames subdued, a blaze that gained headway early this morning at the Bridgeport Mattress Co. was one of the most dangerous and stubborn fires that the department has had to contend with in many months. Re-igniting the scene at the great blaze that threatened the business district only a week ago, a ponderous elevator at the top floor of the factory, separated from the cables by the heat of the flames, plunged in a fiery mass to the basement of the building.

Half a dozen firemen, caught between the blaze on the top of the building and the furnace-like basement, stimulated to destruction by the blazing elevator, just had time to escape a trap in which lives might have been lost. A warning cry from Assistant Chief Beardsley gave them the knowledge of their danger and they had a minute or two in which to leap down a stairway.

The warehouse of the Hadley Furniture Co. adjoining the building, was saved from the flames.

Tenement houses near the burning building were made insecure by showers of water, but their sides were scorched before the main fire was extinguished.

The first fire broke out at 9:20 yesterday morning at the factory, 22 East Washington avenue.

The factory is in the building at one time known as the "rag shop," which furnished many a thrilling scene in the days gone by. The fire broke out in a picking machine in the shoddy department, falling on a bale of cotton used in filling the mattress.

The firemen worked until 4 o'clock in the afternoon in an endeavor to subdue the fire, which was a smoldering one, the flames having crept between the walls of the factory building. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon the firemen were sent back to their house as it was believed that the last spark of fire had been extinguished.

Shortly after 4 o'clock this morning the watchman at the plant saw great flames leaping out of the second-story windows of the factory and he sounded an alarm from box No. 38 at East Washington and Housatonic avenues. Engine Companies 4 and 4, Chemical Co. 1 and Truck No. 2 responded and a line of hose was played upon the second story. Assistant Chief Beardsley then ordered a line of hose carried up the blazing stairway in order to combat the flames in the interior of the shop.

Firemen had reached the top of the staircase on the second floor when a sudden gust of wind drove the flames into their faces and they were forced to retreat to the sidewalk. Again the firemen charged up the stairway and again they were repulsed but not daunted and they returned the third time.

In the meantime the flames swept up the elevator shaft and the top floor of left activity was a roaring mass of flames which eventually licked their way through the roof of the building. The elevator was on the third floor of the burning building and suddenly a loud crash was heard as the heavy vehicle crashed to the bottom floor, a heap of burning material, which soon turned the bottom floor into what resembled a furnace. The heat caused the wire cable attached to the elevator to break.

### BRAVES BLIZZARD IN NIGHTCLOTHES TO COMBAT FIRE

Japanese Valet Aids in Saving Life of Wife of New Britain Man.

New Britain, Dec. 14—While the fire department was battling against the storm at 2 o'clock this morning the residence of William T. Sloper, on Lexington street, was gutted by fire and the occupants driven out in scant attire. The damage is estimated at between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

When the fire was discovered an effort was made to send in an alarm from a nearby fire box but the storm had torn down the wires. The telephone was pressed into service and fire headquarters was notified. On the arrival of the department a scream was heard and a maid employed by Mrs. Sloper was seen signalling for help from a third story window. She was taken down safely and removed to a hospital suffering from cuts from the jagged glass.

A few minutes after the flames broke out a Japanese valet employed by President H. C. M. Thompson of the American Hardware Corporation, who lives in the same house ran to a garage in his nightclothes, secured a garden hose and, attaching it to a kitchen faucet, attempted to drown the flames.

Mr. Sloper is a survivor of the Titanic catastrophe.

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### BULGARS CUT OFF FRENCH

French Lines Separated From English as Bulgar's Break Through, Says Official Statement in Berlin.

Greek Government Commendeers All Greek Shipping to Make up Lack of Food and Supplies Through Country.

Berlin, Dec. 14—Bulgarian troops have broken through the Anglo-French line and cut off the French forces from the British, according to an official statement, dated December 12, received here today from Sofia.

It is stated that a long section of the French front was taken by storm, the French forces suffering heavy losses. Pursuit of the allied troops continues.

GREECE SEIZES SHIPPING.

London, Dec. 14—The Greek government, it was learned here today, has commandeered all Greek shipping in British and American ports in an effort to supply the deficiency in food and coal which exists in Greece as a result of the entente allies' restrictions.

Germany to Fight More Concessions to Allies by Greece

London, Dec. 14—Germany apparently has no intention of permitting Greece to grant any further concessions to the allies without a vehement protest. Reuter's correspondent at Athens says German diplomats already have taken steps which are likely to add considerably to Greece's difficulties if pressed.

It was reported at Athens, the correspondent continues, that Germany has asked Greece "whether the new facilities afforded the allies compromise Greek neutrality in any way."

MAIL SYSTEM IN GREATEST TIE UP IN LOCAL HISTORY

The tie up in the mail system is the greatest in the history of the local post office. The last mail train from New York came through at 8:20 last night and from that time until twelve o'clock this morning there was no mail from any city west of Bridgeport. At this time a train came through bringing all the mail of the night until the 12:45 noon train. The outgoing mail to New York was sent regularly from the post office to the station where it was placed upon the first train that went through.

The delay of the mails was felt generally throughout the city; not only by the business houses affected by it but by those who for the first time in the history of the city were unable to obtain their morning New York papers.

POSTPONE TRIAL OF GEO. MOSHIER UNTIL FEB. TERM

The trial of George Moshier of this city, charged with manslaughter as a result of the death of William Costello in the automobile accident on the Ox Hill road, has been postponed until the February term of the criminal superior court. Before court opened this morning there was a conference, between State's Attorney Cummings and Attorney Henry E. Shannon, representing the accused.

### NEW HAVEN SYSTEM'S GIANT LINES CRIPPLED BY TERRIFIC STORM

Millions of Dollars of Equipment, Representing Eleven Years of Technical Study is Prostrated by Tremendous Gale Carrying Snow and Rain.

On the New Haven system 11 years of technical study, and equipment representing millions of dollars became temporarily useless today.

The entire electrical service, snapped last night at the beginning of what is said by old railroad men to be a small storm as compared with those of years gone by. Even the signal system of the road, which has never in the history of telegraphy been fully out of commission, went by the board as the result of crossing high tension circuits, and although the roadbeds to Boston and New York were partly opened, the running of trains had to be accomplished by semi-guess work and under the most hazardous conditions.

Thousands of passengers besieged the local railroad stations from six o'clock last night on some of them returning to local hotels for the night and others remaining in semi-sleep at the station hoping against hope for trains to or from New York.

It was estimated two thousand persons were in the waiting room at one time this morning clamoring for trains to or from New York.

The last train from New York arrived in this city at 8:30 last night bearing mails. The first train through

from New Haven after 11 o'clock last night was the train leaving New Haven at 4:45 a. m. this morning which arrived in Bridgeport at 11:07. Its regular schedule here is 5:19 a. m. It attempted to make the passage to New York where a wreck last night still blocked the tracks as far as is known today.

All communication with the outer world by telegraph and over railroad lines discontinued at 10 o'clock last night and the whereabouts of trains is merely a matter of conjecture. A partial telephone line service with New Haven was established this morning but it was of little value.

The last train over the Housatonic or Berkshire branches of the New Haven system was that left last night. Their whereabouts is unknown for all telegraph and telephone communication via Waterbury, Newtown, Danbury and county points, west is severed.

A train consisting of baggage and accommodation coach, made up for Waterbury this morning was not dispatched, as, with hundreds of passengers pleading to be taken to New Haven that they might get connections east or west, Trainmaster Peter Hunt, taking the initiative, today decided upon sending a special train to

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New Electrical System of New Haven Railroad Is Wrecked In Storm That Hits Bridgeport Worst of All Connecticut Cities—Death Lurks In Maze of Fallen Wires Throughout City.—Big Fire Destroys Building in Height of Storm—Fire Chief Imperiled When Falling Wires Enmesh His Automobile—State Highways Through Country Are Completely Blocked By Heavy Drifts.

Bridgeport today started to dig itself out after a fierce snow and sleet storm that wrought untold damage in the eastern states.

Lashed by winds of hurricane proportions, the storm wrecked the new electrical system of the New York, New Haven & Hartford railroad, between here and New York.

Local and suburban trolley service was at a standstill from 10 o'clock last night until late today.

Telephone, telegraph and lighting systems went out of commission as huge poles tottered under the weight of the heavy snow and sleet.

Falling wires started several slight fires in various sections of the city and jeopardized the lives of belated pedestrians.

Many sections of the city were without lights after 10 o'clock last night. Repair crews after a 24-hour siege hoped to have all lights burning tonight.

Estimates of the damage done are unavailable. For the lighting company alone, two months' repair work is necessitated by the storm of last night.

Bridgeport was hardest hit in the interruption of telephone service, according to an official statement of the Southern New England Telephone Company. More than 1,000 stations here were out of service.

Sound navigation was hazardous. The United States Torpedo Boat Destroyer Allwyn put in here today.

The Park City turned back yesterday afternoon. The City of Fall River and the Seaboard sought shelter here.

Practically no operation of trains was carried on in this neighborhood. Thousands of passengers have been waiting hours at the local station for a train.

No trains are running on the Berkshire and Naugatuck lines. The few that are running on the main system are conducted by the system in vogue in the '60's.

Fire broke out early this morning in the engine house of the Stratford fire department.

Passengers on the Winsted express for New York stayed aboard the train all night when it became stalled near Torrington. A snow ploy that set out to the rescue became stalled near Winsted, where 20 inches of snow had fallen.

The first train through from New York arrived in South Norwalk at 4 o'clock this morning. It was nine hours late. The engine jumped the tracks in front of station, effectually blocking traffic for several hours more.

New York and Boston report much suffering during the storm, one of the heaviest in years. From the Berkshires is the report that the storm rivalled the blizzard of 1888.

Along the post road, between Bridgeport and Stamford, scores of telegraph poles are down and most of the through telephone and telegraph wires are out of commission. The loss in this direction will be thousands of dollars.

While the motor-driven fire apparatus was stalled in snow drifts, a \$10,000 fire raged this morning in the home of William T. Sloper, in New Britain.

Former President William H. Taft, bound from New York to New Haven, was one of hundreds who slept aboard trains that were stalled just outside of the Grand Central Station, New York.

### FIRE CHIEF AND DRIVER NEAR DEATH WHEN POLE FALLS UPON THEIR CAR

Fire Chief Daniel E. Johnson and his chauffeur, Michael Bain, were close to death last night when a telegraph pole fell near Madison avenue and Grand street, missing the chief's car by only a few feet. The pole carried with it scores of live wires that fell in a tangled mass around the car.

Chief Johnson was on his way to the station of Engine company No. 4 in Madison avenue. Chauffeur Bain had been threading his way among tangled wires, fallen trees and poles and, altogether, was having a rather busy time of it.

Just before turning from Grand street into Madison avenue, the chauffeur veered to the left side of the road to avoid a wire entanglement. As he did so, there was a terrific cannon-like report. An instant later, a huge pole toppled to the street, a few feet in the rear of the chief's car.

Following the first report, there was a series of explosions like rifle fire, as the scores of live wires parted. The whole street was enveloped in a green-blue flame.

The wires fell around the car and a

shower of sparks hit the top. Chauffeur Bain accelerated the speed of the car to get out of the danger zone. Flames shot along the wires and atop the poles for several blocks.

At Madison avenue, the chief's car encountered a big auto truck, the engine running but no driver in the seat. Chauffeur Bain expressed the belief that the driver had determined that his life was worth more than his job when the poles began to fall.

Chief Johnson worked all night. He was called first to Main and Grand streets where a bell alarm had been sounded when falling wires fired roofs of several buildings in the vicinity. Later the chief responded to a still alarm from Coleman and Pequonnock streets, where wires caused another slight blaze and endangered homes. It was while returning from this fire to No. 4 engine company's house, that the chief's car was nearly hit by a falling pole.

Chief Johnson was up all night and remained up today, giving assistance to Superintendent Platt of the fire

### Weather Forecast

Fair tonight and Wednesday; colder tonight.